



NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**THE FLORIDA AIR NATIONAL GUARD
A MODEL FOR SUCCESSFUL RECRUITING**

by

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March 2006

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**THE FLORIDA AIR NATIONAL GUARD
A MODEL FOR SUCCESSFUL RECRUITING**

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ABSTRACT

Effective recruitment strategies are essential to the maintenance of an all-volunteer military. Shortfalls in recruiting, such as those that have been experienced by the Air National Guard, U.S. Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve, threaten the viability of national military strategies that call for the U.S. military to be capable of simultaneously fighting two major wars and dealing with catastrophic man-made or natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.

The Florida Air National Guard has been well ahead of its goals. Through successful recruitment policies, the Florida Air National Guard is, and will continue to be, "Ready, Relevant, and Reliable." This research is to identify the best practices that the Florida Air National Guard uses to recruit professional personnel and examine how these practices could be applied to other Air National Guard organizations along with other branches of the service.

An empowered Recruiting and Retention Superintendent along with an innovative team approach have been successfully implemented and used by the Florida Air National Guard since June 2000. Many of the recruitment issues that the military faces today can be resolved by adopting the Florida Air National Guard's very successful model of leadership, communication, empowerment, and a team approach.

The information presented in this thesis will draw on a variety of sources to show that the effective utilization of the Florida Air National Guard Recruiting and Retention Superintendent has had a dramatic and successful impact on the Florida Air National Guard's recruitment efforts.

Based on secondary research, interviews, statistical analysis and an evaluation of present and past practices, this thesis will provide a path for recruiting that is focused, has a streamlined chain of command, along with the entire state recruiters working as a team to meet the needs of the entire state recruiting goals.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. RECRUITING AND RETAINING OF NATIONAL GUARD PERSONNEL

Serious recruitment and retaining problems face all National Guard units today, threatening their ability to fulfill both their traditional state and federal dual missions as well as increased missions in homeland defense and security: An authority on the issue of retention in the Air National Guard noted, "I'm concerned that we may be demanding too much – not just from reservists, but also from their family members and civilian employers. If we commit our people to more than they can reasonably provide, retaining could drop drastically."¹

Although recruiting and retaining has suffered in most National Guard units, the Florida Air National Guard has been well ahead of its recruiting goals. Through successful recruitment policies, the Florida Air National Guard is, and will continue to fulfill its goal of being, "Ready, Relevant, and Reliable." Why does the Florida Air National Guard enjoy success in recruitment? The focus of this research is to identify the best practices that the Florida Air National Guard uses to recruit professional personnel and examine how these practices could be applied to other National Guard units.

B. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Effective recruitment and retaining strategies are essential to the maintenance of an all-volunteer military. Shortfalls in recruiting, such as those that have been experienced by the U.S. Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve, threaten the viability of national military strategies that call for the U.S. military to be capable of simultaneously fighting two major wars and dealing with catastrophic man-made or natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.

Lt. General Ron Helmy, the Chief of the Army Reserve, sent a memo to other Army leaders on Dec. 20, 2004 saying that his force of 200,000 reservists "is rapidly

¹ Quoted in Lieutenant Colonel Joseph E. Lucas, and Lieutenant Colonel Stuart C. Johnson, "Air National Guard Fighters in the Total Force," *The Maxwell Papers*, n.d. (Available at <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/ct/maxpap.html>.) (Accessed 5/31/05)

degenerating into a broken force."² The issue of recruitment and retaining, which has been highly publicized in print and electronic media, has come to the forefront of the American consciousness with the release and awareness of the loss numbers within the Army Reserves and National Guard. In 2005, the Army National Guard missed its recruiting objectives by one-third and the Army Reserve did only slightly better. They are encountering recruitment and retaining problems for a variety of reasons, and if their goals and end strength numbers do not meet expectations, it will have a dramatic effect on their missions within their states, their deployments to theatres overseas, and to homeland security.

The Army is in the midst of a recruitment crisis and is attempting to use new ways to entice possible recruits, which includes re-training all recruiters in better techniques and recruitment practices. They are also increasing dramatically the maximum age for recruits from thirty-four to forty-three years. At the same time, the National Guard is appealing to the patriotism of parents to encourage their children to enlist in the Reserves or National Guard. A major redefinition of the role of the citizen soldier is occurring.

Ralph Peters, a retired Army Col., states, "the most crucial factor affecting the reserves and National Guard today is not money, not motivation, but instead it is an issue of time."³ Whether it is the Air National Guard or the Army National Guard, recruiting and retaining is affected by the "time" issue: time as it relates to deployments, time lost to employers, and time lost to family. The following issues affect recruiting (and retaining) across all lines of the National Guard:

- Stress on family lives;
- Financial stress;
- Employer pressure and job uncertainty;
- Increasing number of deployments;

² Bradley Graham, "General Says Army Reserve is Becoming a Broken Force," *Washington Post*, January 6, 2005.

³ Michael P. Noonan, "The Future of the Reserves and the National Guard: A Conference Report," *Foreign Policy Research Institute E-Notes*, January 19, 2005, 6. www.fpri.org/enotes/20050119.noonan.citizensoldier (Accessed 11/23/05)

- Longer deployments of more uncertain length (Reservists and National Guard personnel spend longer in-theater than do active-duty soldiers);
- Greater impact of stop-loss (than on active-duty soldiers);
- Delay of promotions (because the National Guard is going from Title 32 to Title 10 and there is not, as yet, a clear channel for promotion while they are activated under Title 10, active duty federal status)
- Higher compensation paid to civilian contractors doing similar work;
- No short-term or long-term exit strategy;
- Changes in rationale for America to fight "wars."⁴

The ability of the active Air Force, Reserves, and the Air National Guard to work in concert as a part of the Total Force Concept requires airmen and officers to be recruited and retained so that national security missions can be met. The reserve component of the Air Force accounts for over one-third of Air Force strike fighters, more than seventy-two percent of America's tactical airlift, forty-two percent of the country's strategic airlift, and fifty-two percent of air refueling capability. The airmen of America's Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard have demonstrated their expertise and the value of their contributions joint coalition combat. These combat operations are made possible by Air Force investments in realistic training and education, superior organization, advanced technology and innovative tactics, techniques and procedures. General John Jumper, former Chief of Staff of the Air force said that to renew America's force, "we target our recruitment to ensure a diverse force with the talent and drive to be the best airmen in the world's greatest Air Force. We will recruit those with the skills most critical for our continued success."⁵

⁴Military.com, "Murtha says he's not to Blame," <http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,84687,00.html?ESRC=dod>; GAO Testimony Before the Subcommittee on Military Personnel, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, Statement of Derek B. Stewart, Director, Defense Capabilities Management, "Preliminary Observations on Recruiting and Retention Issues within the U.S. Armed Forces", Wednesday, March 16, 2005, accessed November 15, 2005, 3,4; GAO-05-419T "Why the Rush to Throw Money at Retention and Recruiting Problems, Will Not Fix the Personnel Crisis," February 17, 1999. <http://www.d-n-i.net/fcs/comments/c234.htm> Comment #238 (Accessed 11/10/05).

⁵ Honorable James Roche and General John Jumper, "Department of the Air Force National Defense Authorization Budget Request," in *House Armed Service Committee held in Washington, D.C., February 26, 2004*, ed. Congress (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Printing Office, 2004).

C. STRATEGIES OF THE FLORIDA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

This thesis will attempt to show that many of the recruitment issues facing the military today can be resolved by adopting the Florida Air National Guard's successful recruitment model of using statewide recruiting resources under the leadership of a recruiting superintendent who ensures recruiters use a team approach.

On June 9, 2000, Brig. General Douglas Burnett, then Assistant Adjutant General for the Florida Air National Guard (FLANG), signed a memorandum for all units entitled "Supervision of FLANG Recruiters and Retainers."⁶ This memorandum had an immediate impact within the Florida Air National Guard that facilitated a significant increase in recruitment. It created an environment that has made possible the FLANG's ability to meet and exceed its recruitment goals.

The implementation of the policies contained in this memorandum mandated a complete restructuring of the recruiting and retaining program utilizing a direct chain of command from recruiters across the state to the Superintendent of Recruiting and Retaining. This allowed the recruiters to utilize a team concept. The Recruiting and Retention Superintendent was given authority by the Commander of the Florida Air National Guard to oversee and direct activity for the recruiting force and was directed to set new goals for performance.

As a result, the Florida Air National Guard went from eighty-seven percent recruitment to a rate of ninety-six percent after just six months; after one year, the recruitment rate was 102 percent. The Air National Guard at that time had a national recruiting rate of approximately 100 percent. The Florida Air National Guard, after the implementation of the General Memorandum from Brigadier General Burnett, was in the top ten percent of the nation for both recruiting and retaining. Within this one-year period, there was an increase of fifteen percent in recruitment. This thesis will examine the reasons for Florida's turnaround in recruitment and address the feasibility of applying such a model nationwide.

⁶ Brig. General Douglas Burnett, FLANG, Assistant Adjutant General of Air, *Supervision of FLANG Recruiters & Retainers* (St. Augustine, FL: Florida Air National Guard, 2000).

D. METHODOLOGY

The information presented in this thesis will draw on published statistics, anecdotal sources, and interviews to show that the effective utilization of the Florida Air National Guard streamlined chain of command which places the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent in charge of all recruiting and retaining resources within the state, has had a significant positive impact on the Florida Air National Guard's recruitment.

This thesis will examine the impact that the "general memorandum" by General Burnett, dated June 9, 2000 had on the recruitment of personnel and on the recruiters and retainers who are responsible for meeting FLANG's goals. Post-memorandum recruitment, enlistment percentages, achievements, and practices will be compared prior to and after the issuance of General Burnett's memorandum. At the same time, the author will include a comparison and ranking of the Florida Air Guard along with other Air National Guard Commands in recruitment and their success in meeting end strength goals. This comparison will show how the Florida Air National Guard is above average in recruitment, why the organizational team approach is successful, and how the Air National Guard benefits.

Furthermore, the thesis will examine the team approach that the Florida Air National Guard has employed as evidenced in interviews with Recruitment and Retention Superintendents as well as recruiters and retainers within Florida. These interviews will explore the opinions and recommendations of personnel involved in recruiting and retaining personnel. Because the literature with regard to the recruitment and retaining practices of the military, and specifically the Air National Guard, is limited, these interviews serve as testimony to the effective recruitment and retaining practices of the Florida Air National Guard.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature with regard to the Air National Guard is limited to a handful of published histories. There are even fewer writings relating specifically to the best practices or chain-of-command variations for recruitment and retaining within the Air National Guard. This dearth of published material may be due to a perception that the Air National Guard has not experienced a decline in either recruiting or retaining. However, this author will suggest that the Air National Guard *is* experiencing recruiting (and retaining) difficulties that must be taken into consideration for the future of the Air National Guard. This opinion is based on what published materials are available (in the form of articles, testimony, and memorandums) and the author's interviews with Air National Guard recruiting personnel. The review of the available literature explores both recruiting and retaining, as the two are usually considered in tandem.

A. RECRUITING AND RETAINING

In testimony before Congress in March 2005, Derek B. Stewart stated "Recruiting is the military services' ability to bring new members into the military to carry out mission essential tasks in the near term and to begin creating a sufficient pool of entry-level personnel to develop into future mid-level and upper-level military leaders."⁷ Stewart defined retaining as "the ability to keep personnel with the necessary skills and experience. Service members have the opportunity to either leave the military or reenlist when their contracts expire."⁸ A concern that faces all of the military, including the Air National Guard, is that too few people with the needed skills and experience will enlist and then stay in the military, thereby creating a shortage of experienced personnel, decreased military efficiency, and lower job satisfaction among those who remain.

⁷ Derek B. Stewart, "Military Personnel, "Preliminary Observations on Recruiting and Retention Issues within the U.S. Armed Forces," in *Before the Subcommittee on Military Personnel, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives held in Washington, DC March 16, 2005*, GAO-05-419T (Washington, DC: General Accounting Office and House of Representatives, 2005).

⁸ Ibid.

Since September 11, some of the military services have implemented a "stop loss" policy, which may, in the short term, facilitate the meeting of the services' enlistment goals. A stop loss policy requires some service members to remain in the military beyond their contracted separation or retirement date. Keeping personnel longer in the context of "stop loss" can reduce the number of new people the services need to recruit to maintain end strength goals. Stop loss can also give a false impression that the Air National Guard and other reserve components are meeting their recruiting and retaining goals.

In an online article summarizing a 2004 survey on military retaining problems, Charles Aldinger quotes a Guard spokesperson as stating "A survey by the Army and Air National Guard indicates more part-time troops could begin leaving the stressed U.S. military after overseas deployments such as Iraq."⁹ The voluntary survey of 5,000 Air and Army Guard troops returning from Iraq, and other overseas deployments, found that the rate of those leaving the military after such assignments could jump from a current 12.5 percent to more than twenty percent. These surveys are expected to fuel concern that the military might face a future exodus among the tens of thousands of part-time soldiers called to active duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. "[This is] not a knee-jerk reaction to numbers in the survey,"¹⁰ said Dan Donohue, a spokesperson for the National Guard Bureau at the Pentagon. "We want to have a good handle on that soldier's or airman's mind as they return from overseas because a big issue is retaining. It is keeping the good people you've got."¹¹ Aldinger also quotes Chief Pentagon spokesperson Lawrence Di Rita as saying "The survey was part of efforts to watch for any negative trend in recruitment and retaining."¹²

Aldinger's article shows the need for the Air National Guard to be aware of the recruiting and retaining issues it might face. To lose qualified airmen requires not only

⁹ Charles Aldinger, "Survey Suggests U.S. Military Retention Problems," *Common Dreams News Center*, 2004. <http://www.commondreams.org>. (Accessed 1/24/05).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

the recruitment of new personnel but also spending additional dollars on training new recruits. This article also highlights the need for effective monitoring of recruiting and retaining within the Air National Guard and an increased awareness of the recruiting and retaining environment.

In a January 2004 special edition of *The On Guard*, Master Sgt Bob Haskell quoted Major Robert Howell, Chief of the Strength Operations Branch at the National Guard Bureau as stating "One of the big reasons people get out of the Guard is because of the time the drills and deployments take them away from their families."¹³ Staying in the Guard takes its toll on family and employment commitment, especially when there are long deployments and increased drills.

Writing for the *Air Force Times*, Bryant Jordan claimed "All four active-duty branches met or exceeded their recruitment and re-enlistment goals in December 2005, according to Pentagon figures. But two of the six reserve components, the Air National Guard and Naval Reserve, failed to meet goals."¹⁴ The Air Guard's numbers for December continued a downward trend that began toward the end of fiscal year 2005. The Air National Guard in December 2005 fell short of its re-enlistment goal, signing ninety-seven percent of the 2,356 airmen it hoped to keep in uniform. "In December," Jordan states, "an official attributed the poor recruitment showing to more aggressive canvassing by the other service branches."

In March 2005, Erika N. Cotton published an online article titled "Retail Recruiting." She quotes Senior Master Sgt. Tim Fisher, Wyoming Air Guard's recruiting superintendent: "We have not changed recruiting tactics but have had to answer many potential recruits' 'war questions.' Sometimes people even ask for a guarantee they will not have to go overseas if they join. We tell everyone, when you come in, you ultimately

¹³MSgt. Bob Haskell, "Recruiting and Retention: The key to a ready, reliable, relevant and accessible force," *On Guard*, January 2004, Special Edition.

<http://www.ngb.army.mil/onguard/33/01/article.asp?aid=1087>. (Accessed 9/15/05)

¹⁴ Bryant Jordan, "Air Guard misses re-enlistment, recruiting goals," *Air Force Times*, 2006. <http://www.airforcetimes.com>. (Accessed 1/11/06).

sign a contract, and that can mean you may go to war." ¹⁵ The Northeast has felt a "huge recruiting impact" states Sergeant Fisher. "Recruiting is not going to be so good at a Guard unit that is smack dab in an ultra-liberal community because there is so much propaganda out there."¹⁶

Cotton's article examines recruiting strategies. In 1999, when Maj. Gen. Paul Sullivan, National Guard Bureau Vice Chief, was Ohio Air Guard's Assistant Adjutant General, he approached recruiting as a business. "With sales," General Sullivan says, "it all goes back to how much one believes in the product and its intrinsic value.... You kind of have to look recruiters in the eye and ask them if it's something they're interested in for themselves, their children, their wife, and if they cannot answer 'yes' to that, they are not going to be successful." To be competitive for new missions, Ohio needed to stress manning as one of its overall strengths. At the time, the Ohio Air Guard was at ninety-six percent of its end strength. "The important thing is to try to identify the leading indicators as much as you can so you can see early on what's working and what is not working," General Sullivan said. "By the time you're in a month where recruiting is bad, you are about two or three months too late."¹⁷

The General, along with his recruiting and retaining team, was able to monitor recruiting progress and shortfalls on a timely basis. At the same time, the General and his team applied a monitoring system to retaining. Their primary monitoring method was exit interviews, during which members were asked why they were leaving.

"Some people finished their six years in the service, and that was just it. But in a lot of cases, we discovered that wasn't really the whole story," said General Sullivan.¹⁸

The exit interviews showed that many people left because they did not know of other opportunities the Guard offered.

¹⁵ Erika N. Cotton, "Retail Recruiting," ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2005. <http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi>. (Accessed 3/21/05).

¹⁶ Erika N. Cotton, "Retail Recruiting," ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2005. <http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi>. (Accessed March 2005).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

III. THE NATIONAL GUARD: HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The Congress shall have the power,...To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions; To provide for organizing, arm, and disciplining the Militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the states respectively, the appointment of the Officers, and the authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by the Congress.

Constitution of the United States, Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 15 and 16.

A. ORIGINS OF THE U.S. NATIONAL GUARD

The precursor to the Army National Guard dates back to 1636 when the first colonists began to settle in the Massachusetts area. There was only one reason the militia had formed: to protect their families and homes from attack. Every white male colonist aged sixteen to sixty was required to serve in the militia. The early militia banded together to defend the colonies against attacks from Indians, the French, and the Spanish. The Revolutionary War began in 1775 with the battles of Lexington and Concord, where 164,000 militiamen and thousands of volunteers came together to defeat the British. Colonial militiamen and armed citizens agreed to turn out for service at a moment's notice. When Lord Cornwallis surrendered, thirty-one militia units carried Revolutionary War battle streamers attached to their unit colors. At the war's end, the framers of the Constitution realized that the militia had acquired two missions: the protection of towns and states and the protection of the nation. The Militia Act of 1792 required all free, able-bodied, white males between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to enroll in the militia, and they soon became recognized as the basis of today's "National Guard."

The term "national guard" came about in 1824 with New York's Seventh Regiment, the first militia unit to acquire the name National Guard. In 1861, when the Civil War broke out, Guardsmen from all over the country came to fight on both sides of the conflict. The Militia Act of 1903 prescribed federal standards for the Guard. These new standards meant that the Guard was to be trained and equipped according to Army

standards. The Defense Act of 1916 placed all state militia units under the National Guard. This act was later amended in 1933, under the National Guard Mobilization Act, to place all National Guard units under the control of the United States Army; this effectively ended their status as a "militia" under Article 1, section 8, paragraphs 15, 16 of the Federal Constitution and the second Amendment of the Constitution. In 1933, Congress authorized the creation of the National Guard of the United States (consisting of all National Guard Units), which could be ordered into federal service by the President. Of the first five U.S. Army divisions entering offensive action during World War II, four were from the National Guard, and included the Army Air Corps component of the Guard.

B. ORIGINS OF THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD

The Air National Guard as it is known today is a by-product of rivalry and inter-service competition during (and after) World War II. The airmen who had planned – during World War II – to have a large, separate Air Force had little faith in the Army Air Corps component of the National Guard. They felt that there would be no need for Air National Guard units, which were neither well-equipped nor well-trained; a large Air Force would be all that was necessary for future wars. The Army National Guard itself had well-established experience, vision, and a large stake in aviation. Between World War I and World War II, the Army National Guard had formed twenty-nine observation squadrons.¹⁹ Due to a lack of understanding and the military's desire to have the largest Air Force available, the Army Air Corps component of the National Guard encountered many difficulties. Although it looked good on paper, one General referred to the Army Air Corps component of the National Guard as "flyable storage;" other observers called the units "state-sponsored flying clubs."²⁰

The Air National Guard was authorized after the creation of a separate Air Force on September 18, 1947. The Air Force and the National Guard spent the late 1940s

¹⁹ Charles J. Gross, *Air National Guard: a Short History* (Washington: National Guard Bureau Historical Services Division, 1994), Chapter II.

²⁰ Dr. Charles J. Gross, "Prelude to the Total Force: The Air National Guard, Past, Present, and Future Prospects," *Air Power Journal* (Winter 1996), 62.

fighting over who was in charge. In 1950, the Army and Air Force strengthened the power of the Air National Guard and Army National Guard division chiefs to administer their organizations in response to the directives of their respective services. Throughout the 1950s, Congress played a key role in placing reserve programs on a solid footing, in response to the poor showing the reserves had made during the mobilization of 1950-1951.

The Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 eliminated most of the old inequities and fostered the development of more effective reserve components. It also permitted the use of Guard and Reserve volunteers to support the active duty forces. However, the Air Force at large viewed the small Air National Guard units as useless. It did not understand nor appreciate the considerable political power that the National Guard had. Against the objections of the Air Force, America's post-war military would have an Air National Guard.

The first commander of the Air Defense Command, Air National Guard, Lieutenant General George E. Stratemeyer, was given the responsibility for the air defense of the entire North American continent. To assist in the performance of this task, all Air National Guard squadrons were assigned to his command. To the Air National Guard's credit, these squadrons provided the overwhelming majority of the country's then-existing air strength.²¹

The father and genius of the Air National Guard was General Winston "Wimpy" P. Wilson of the Arkansas Air National Guard. General Wilson joined the National Guard Bureau in 1950, following his assignment as commander in Arkansas. General Wilson progressed from staff to head of the air section and ultimately to Chief of the Bureau. He recognized that the Air Guard faced a dim future unless it acquired missions directly connected with the Air Force, received training that was better than, or at least the same as, the Air Force, and had definite wartime responsibilities. The Air Guard also needed more full-time staffing to manage the growth and responsibilities that he

²¹ Robert Hawk, *Florida's Air Force, Air National Guard 1946-1990* (St. Augustine, Florida: National Guard Historical Foundation, Inc, 1990).

projected. Under the leadership of General Wilson, the Air National Guard progressed from a group of "local flying club members" to a valued component of the Air Force.

The Army Air component of the National Guard (which was the Army Air Corps up until the early 1950s, when it became the Air National Guard) has participated in the following actions and mobilizations:²²

- Mexican Border Crisis (1916) – approximately seventy units mobilized;
- World War I (1917-1918) – total mobilization unknown;
- World War II (1940-1945) – 4,800 mobilized;
- Korean War (1950-1952) – approximately 45,000 (eighty percent of the force) mobilized, six fighter units served in combat;
- Berlin Crisis (1961-1962) – 21,067 mobilized, eleven fighter squadrons deployed to Europe, six heavy airlift units mobilized;
- Vietnam War (1968-1969) – 10,676 mobilized, four fighter units sent to Vietnam, two deployed to Korea;
- Persian Gulf Crisis (1990-1991) – 10,456 mobilized, 12,404 Air Guardsmen served (including volunteers);
- Kosovo War (1999) – 4,064 mobilized, 253 volunteers served in EUCOM, approximately 300 served in the CONUS;
- Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Noble Eagle (2001) – 5,000 mobilized.²³

C. THE FLORIDA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

The beginning of the Florida Air National Guard can be traced to the publication of a National Guard Bureau circular dated March 16, 1946.²⁴ This circular gave the states permission to request their own Air Force unit allotment. On December 9, 1946, Florida's Adjutant General, Vivian Collins, formally requested an Air Guard contingent for his state. On February 9, 1947 (the official birthday of the Florida Air Guard), federal recognition was extended to all four component units of the Air Guard. On the first

²² Air National Guard, *The History of Air Guard Federal Call Ups* (Air National Guard), 1-3. <http://www.ang.af.mil/history/callups.asp> (Accessed 4/4/05).

²³ U.S. Air Force, *Noble Eagle/Enduring Freedom*, March 2005 (Air Force statistics, United States Air Force), 1. Accessed June 2005 at <http://af.mil/news/efreedom/facts.shtml>.

²⁴ Robert Hawk, *Florida's Air Force, Air National Guard 1946-1990* (St. Augustine: Florida National Guard Historical Foundation, Inc, 1990), 27.

anniversary of its formation, the Florida Air National Guard included 101 officers and men of an authorized strength of 133. Of all the Air Guard Units in the nation in 1950, only six squadrons, including Florida's 159th fighter squadron, were assigned combat roles during the Korean conflict. In a very brief period, the fledgling Florida Air National Guard became one of the premier National Guard organizations in the nation. When the Florida Air National Guard returned to Jacksonville, Florida in 1952, they were on the verge of the most important time in their history. The Air Guard would become an integral and operational part of the United States Air Force and the continental air defense system.

During the 1960s the Florida Air National Guard underwent many changes, with a new air defense mission, new aircraft, and new training procedures. One of the major accomplishments and professional turning points for the Florida Air National Guard was an Air Force-wide aerial gunnery competition. The 159th was selected to be a participant and won the competition with a perfect score, which has never been repeated. The winning of this competition shook the regular Air Force pilots; never again were the Florida Air National Guard viewed as inferior to regular units.

During the Cuban missile crisis, the Berlin Wall crisis, and the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Florida Air National Guard was actively involved and defended the borders of the United States with a 24-hour air defense interceptor-alert system. Florida's fighter aircraft assumed much of the Air Force's war-level air defense mission for the southeast part of the continental United States, freeing regular Air Force personnel for potential encounters with Russian aircraft.

Under the Total Force defense policy, the Air National Guard, and especially the Florida Air National Guard, became more indispensable. Washington realized that cost-cutting in these areas was not in the best interest of America. Through increased defense spending on the national level, the Florida Air National Guard was able to get more training and equipment that was better suited to their active-duty missions.

Today the Florida Air National Guard performs federal and state missions with a variety of units. Since September 11, 2001, it has not added any new units, but has

increased its functions and adapted itself to its new tasks. Col. Frank Kozdras, (Ret.), of the Florida Air National Guard, stated "Again, we have enhanced an existing capability within existing mission tasking. What we have primarily changed is our perspective. We used to look out, now we look in."²⁵ Current missions of the Florida Air National Guard include:

- Florida Air National Guard Headquarters, St. Augustine, Florida, home of the Adjutant General of the State of Florida, provides command, control, and logistical oversight of the entire organization;
- 159th Fighter Squadron provides air defenses for the U.S. coastline from Charleston, South Carolina to the panhandle of Florida;
- 290th Joint Communications Support Squadron (McDill Air Force Base, Tampa) provides unified commands, services, defense agencies, and tactical communications systems to support United States national security objectives;
- 202nd Red Horse Squadron (Camp Blanding, Florida) provides a highly mobile, rapidly deployable civil engineering response to the U.S. Air Force;
- 114th Combat Communications Squadron (Patrick AFB, Florida) provides survivable and reliable satellite voice and data communications for command, control, and logistics in support of USAF Air Combat Command and NATO communications requirements;
- 159th Weather Squadron (Camp Blanding, Florida) provides wartime-ready, professional weather teams, capable of the highest quality meteorological services, to Army Infantry Brigades and other tasked active duty units;
- Weather Readiness Training Center (Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida) trains and provides personnel to the Air National Guard weather flights;
- Southeast Air Defense Sector (Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida) provides detection and air defense for more than 3,000 miles of U.S. coastline from North Carolina to Texas;
- Detachment #1, Southeast Air Defense Sector (Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida) provides world-class instructor pilots to support the 325th Fighter Wing mission of training F-15 pilots for the United States Air Force;
- 114th Range Flight (Cape Canaveral Air Station, Florida) supports range operations for STA, Atlas, Delta, and Titan launches at the Cape;

²⁵ (Ret) Col. Frank, "FL-ANG Missions," e-mail to author, May 18, 2005.

- CERFP (Florida) entails a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-yield explosive (CBRNE) enhancement response force package added to the capabilities of the Florida Air National Guard's existing CBRNE capabilities;
- 44th Civil Support Team (Camp Blanding, Florida) augments first response agencies in incidents potentially involving hostile use of chemical weapons.

The missions listed above do not include providing support to the state in times of natural or man-made disasters. The Florida Air National Guard, along with the Army National Guard, responds on a nearly annual basis to hurricane relief in the State of Florida. The Governor of Florida has activated the National Guard on at least three different occasions in the last two years in addition to the activations for Hurricane Katrina.

With the extended deployments, increased missions for natural disasters, family stressors, employment issues and financial concerns, it is only logical that there would be recruitment and retaining problems within the military today. Despite these adverse conditions, the Florida Air National Guard has met and exceeded its recruitment goals. In the following chapters, this thesis will explore the recruitment practices that have enabled the Florida Air National Guard (FLANG) to achieve these goals.

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IV. ISSUES FOR RECRUITMENT AND RETAINING

We do not want to lose the treasure of the National Guard and the citizen soldier. If you think of the Minuteman, hand on the plow and hand on the musket, as I spoke about earlier, now don't think of him that way. Think of the National Guard person as a three-legged stool. One leg is the service member, the women or men who are in the Air or Army National Guard. The other is their families, because most of our members are married and have families, and they have a lot to do with how many times the call will be tolerated. But there is a third leg, that I am most concerned about, more so than I am about the soldier or their families, because I think they have greater elasticity, because they understand the need for it, it's the employer, the civilian. How many times can they tolerate the interruption?²⁶

General H. Steven Blum
Chief, National Guard Bureau

This statement by Gen. Blum – the person responsible for formulating, directing, and coordinating all policies, programs, and plans that affect more than half a million Army and Air National Guard personnel – reflects the history of the Guard and the concerns that are present today within the Guard for the airmen and soldiers, along with the recruitment and problems faced today.

A. DECLINING MILITARY ENLISTMENTS

The United States military must recruit and retain hundreds of thousands of service members each year to carry out its missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other locations, including providing support for natural disasters such as Katrina and Rita in the United States.

Recruiters report that there is a reduced propensity to join the military among today's youth. Due to the realities of war, there is less encouragement today from parents, teachers, and others to join the military. Another influencing factor is that the American economy has been improving and unemployment rates are lower. With wars

²⁶ Briefing on the transforming roles of the National Guard, The Pentagon, Washington, May 2003. <http://www.defenselink.mil>. (Accessed 5/14/05).

and increased deployments, including response to natural disasters within the United States, the urgency of recruitment is dramatically affected. Richard H. Kohn, Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and former Chief Historian of the United States Air Force, stated, "The major problem today is that the realities of America's global commitments were no longer conducive to or appropriate for a citizen army or citizen-soldiers." Professor Kohn went on to say, "Furthermore, the notion of the citizen-soldier is dead."²⁷

The Department of Defense reports that over half of today's youth cannot meet the military's entry standards for education, aptitude, health, moral character or other requirements, making recruitment a significant challenge by limiting the pool from which to draw personnel. This lack of potential candidates, along with the increased deployments, stress factors, family situations, employment worries, promotion problems, and financial concerns only adds to the recruitment shortfalls within the National Guard. In 2005, five of the ten U.S. military components, specifically the Army, Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Air National Guard, and Navy Reserve, missed their recruiting goals by eight to twenty percent.²⁸

B. RECRUITING TO THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD TODAY

The high utilization of the reserve component force of late has been shown to have a negative affect on the recruitment of qualified personnel. In an article written by Rod Powers, "Your Guide to U.S. Military," it is noted that for Fiscal Year 2004 the only services not to meet their recruiting goals were the Air and Army National Guard.²⁹ To address the recruiting challenges, some Guard units are increasing their recruiter and retaining force, offering new incentives for recruitment, especially in hard to fill specialty

²⁷ Richard H. Kohn, "The Future of the Reserves and the National Guard" (Foreign Policy Institute) in Michael P. Noonan, "A Conference Report," January 19, 2005.

http://fpri.org/enotes/20050119_military.noonan.citizensoldier. (Accessed 12/11/05).

²⁸ Jim Kouri, "U.S. Military Continues to Face Recruitment, Retention Challenges," *Conservative Voice*, November 17, 2005, sec. 1, Print.

<http://www.theconservativevoice.com/articles/article.html?d=10058/> (Accessed 11/26/05.)

²⁹ See GAO Testimony, Derek B. Stewart, 2, 3; and Rod Powers, "Services Meet FY 2004 Recruiting Goals, *Your Guide to U.S. Military*, October 15, 2005.

<http://usmilitary.about.com/od/joiningthemilitary/a/2004recruitgoal.htm> (Accessed 12/12/05.)

positions. Air National Guard Brig. General Annette L. Sobel, Director of Joint Intelligence, National Guard Bureau, recently remarked to this writer: "Recruiting and retaining of qualified personnel in the high demand, low density skill sets such as information technologists, linguists, and intelligence analysts are critical to maintaining operational readiness and winning the Global War on Terrorism."³⁰ Lt. General H. Steven Blum has stated that "We are in a more difficult recruiting environment. As the Air and Army National Guard continue to direct their efforts to recruitment and retaining, there are critical positions left vacant."³¹

In a recent speech, President Bush stated, "The time of war is a time of sacrifice, especially for our military families. This administration is sensitive to the hardships and challenges faced by Reserve Component families, especially when the Reserve Component member is called up and away from home for an extended period. All families are a critical deciding factor for retaining and reenlistment decisions."³² What should be remembered is that there needs to be a balance between the Reserve Component member's commitment to country, family, and employer.

Jack Thomas Tomarchio, a senior fellow of the Foreign Policy Research Institute, and a Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, noted that the high tempo of operations for the Reserve Components (RC), including the Air National Guard, since 9/11 has caused great stress on individual soldiers, their families, and employers. A study by the Foreign Policy Institute reached the following conclusions:

- The stresses on the RC began well before 9/11. As the active component shrank during the 1990s, the reserves became more important, but frequent deployments began to compromise the part-time nature of the force. Iraq accelerated these trends.
- The Reserves remain an important mechanism for maintaining a link between the military and American civil society. But the concept of the citizen-soldier itself is under stress.

³⁰In e-mail to author, December 5, 2005.

³¹ Damien Cave, "Vital Military Jobs Go Unfilled."

³² John Marellus, "War is a time of sacrifice," *San Diego Union Tribune*, Dec. 8, 2004. Print, <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/military/20041208-9999-In8bush.html>. (Accessed 7/18/05).

- Air and Army National Guard and the Reserves need additional definition with respect to overseas missions.³³

One of the concerns of the Air National Guard is the decline in enlistments, now some 10,000 airmen and soldiers short of its year-to-date goals.³⁴ The operational tempo for the Guard is also very high, as these "part-time" soldiers now account for almost half of U.S. forces in Iraq. (While Guard has often been viewed as a part-time job, this is no longer the case.) Enlistments have fallen about thirty percent short of recruitment goals during the past two months, according to the *New York Times*.³⁵ The Guard is now offering a larger signing bonus and taking other steps to slow the slide.

C. SUCCESS WITHIN THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Located in 3,000 communities throughout the nation, the goal of meeting the quality benchmarks has presented challenges for the Air National Guard, which must recruit from local communities to fill vacancies.

The Air National Guard is determined to remain ready, reliable, and relevant now and in the future. The Air Guard, as all military services, depends upon well-trained dedicated professionals, and the core competency of the Air National Guard rests with its experienced people. Lieutenant General James Daniel III, Air National Guard Bureau, said in testimony to congress, "In 2003, fifty-two percent of the men and women entering the Air National Guard had prior military service and approximately sixty-two percent of the enlisted members were rated as skill level seven, (a measure the Air Force uses to indicate a high level of proficiency for technical specialties in the Air Force) or higher." The ability to be able to recruit and retain these technically competent personnel is essential. "While recruiting has trended downward, specifically in non-prior service Airmen, I am proud to say that the retaining of our members remains the test of all the services and components."³⁶

³³ Richard H. Kohn, "The Future of the Reserves."

³⁴ Thomas Owens Mackubin, "Will This War Ruin the Army?" *New York Post*, July 2005, sec. C, Print media, http://www.nypost.com/php/pfriendly_new.php/ (Accessed 11/30/05.)

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶ James Daniel III, "Reserve Personnel."

According to General Michael E. Ryan, former U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff, "I believe we, in the Air Force, integrate the Guard, Reserve, and active duty better than anyone else. I am proud of that. We are now so intertwined, so dependent upon each other that each day we build on our enduring trust for the next generations of Total Force airmen."³⁷

2005 was another exceptional year for the Air National Guard. For fiscal year 2005, Air National Guard crews flew well over fifty percent of the fighter, tanker and airlift sorties for Operation Noble Eagle, provided almost one-third of the tanker and airlift sorties in Operation Enduring Freedom, and provided over two-thirds of the fighter and aerial refueling tanker sorties for Operation Iraqi Freedom. "Air National Guard Recruiting and Retaining programs play a vital role in supporting our Homeland Defense mission and our successful transformation to the future, and they are the driving factors as to how well we support the war fighter," said General James.³⁸ Since fiscal year 2004, Air National Guard Aircrues have supported seventy-five percent of the tanker sorties and sixty percent of the airlift sorties worldwide.³⁹ The number of Air National Guard and Air Force reservists on active duty in support of the war on terror, as of the end of September 2005, was 9,822.

The Air National Guard's success is rooted in the quality of the recruits it receives and its ability to retain them (something the Florida Air National Guard focuses closely on). Recruiting and retaining remains a top priority for the Air National Guard and the Florida Air National Guard. (To date, the Air National Guard is 99.3 percent of its authorized strength and its retaining rate is 92.5 percent, exceeding the goal of 91.7 percent.)

³⁷ General Michael E. Ryan, "Air National Guard Vital to Total Force." www.af.mil/news/speech/current/Air_National_Guard,Vitalto.html. (Accessed 11/21/06).

³⁸ Lieutenant General Daniel James III, "Recruiting and Retention," in *Subcommittee on Military Personnel of the Armed Services Committee held in Washington, D.C., July 19, 2005*, House of Representative, ed. (Washington, DC: Congress, 2005).

³⁹Lieutenant General Daniel James III, "Reserve Personnel," in *Presentation to the Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Personnel held in Washington, DC, April 13, 2005*, ed. United States Senate (Washington, DC: U.S. Senate, 2005).

D. STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING RECRUITMENT IN THE FLORIDA AND NEVADA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

On June 9, 2000, Brig. General Douglas Burnett, then Assistant Adjutant General for the Florida Air National Guard, signed a memorandum for all units entitled "Supervision of FLANG Recruiters and Retainers."⁴⁰ This memorandum had an immediate impact on the chain of command and working environment of the recruiters and retainers. General Burnett altered the chain of command for recruiting and retaining of personnel by assigning primary responsibility to a Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent (RRS). Under the previous system, recruiters and retainers worked in isolation and reported to the Commander of local Air National Guard bases. Under such a system, recruiters and retainers were often assigned collateral duties which detracted from their primary task of meeting recruiting goals. This change allowed for an immediate streamlining of recruiting and retaining practices, making one person, the Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent, responsible for the entire state mission of recruiting and retaining. This gave the recruiters and retainers the ability to be creative and to work as a team rather than as independent recruiters and retainers. A similar change was instituted in the Nevada Air National Guard, with a memorandum from Brig. Gen. Cynthia N. Kirkland, dated July 05, 2005. In this memo, Brig. General Kirkland, recognizing the "impossible challenge facing the organization" and the intense competition for the recruitable population, states, "We need to ensure the trained, experienced recruiters use their time in direct recruiting activities."⁴¹

By changing the direct chain of command within the Nevada Air National Guard and giving authority to the Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent (RRS), the Nevada Air Guard will increase its "sales" and meet its end strength goals. As the Air National Guard struggles with its recruiting and retaining of professional personnel, these memoranda show that creative thinking, along with a clear chain of command, is

⁴⁰ Brig. General Douglas Burnett, Assistant Adjutant General for Air, "Memorandum for all Unit Commanders: Supervision of FL ANG Recruiters and Retainers," June 9, 2000 (St. Augustine, Florida: Air National Guard State Headquarters).

⁴¹ Brig. General Cynthia N. Kirkland, Adjutant General NVMD, "Memorandum for 152 AW/CC: Reporting/Management of Nevada ANG Recruiting Staff," July 5, 2005 (Nevada: Air National Guard State Headquarters).

essential in meeting end-strength goals. The positive results and the teamwork that are encouraged by using the RRS demonstrate that this is an effective strategy for recruiting and retaining within the Air National Guard and the military in general.

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V. FLORIDA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

The move to consolidate recruiting and retention and give the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent supervisory authority to work the entire team of recruiters within the state has resulted in the most successful program in our history.

Major General Douglas Burnett, Adjutant General,
Florida National Guard

Due to the continuing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, peacekeeping, and homeland security missions, there is a demand for better and more professional recruitment policies in the armed services. For more than fifty years, selective service and the registration requirements for America's young men served as a backup system to provide manpower to the U.S. Armed Forces. From 1948 until 1973, during peacetime and periods of conflict, men were drafted to fill vacancies in the U.S. Armed Forces that could not be filled through voluntary means. Since the end of the draft in 1973, America has become dependent on the recruiting of qualified, professional individuals to meet the goals of all military services. The "new age" of homeland security and international conflict has created demands that the voluntary system is often unable to meet. Short of restoring the draft, every skill and tool possible must be used to build up and maintain the nation's "All Volunteer Service."

From 1947 to approximately 1977, the Air National Guard (ANG) did not have recruiters. Before 1977, the ANG recruited new members for enlistment or appointment through existing Guard members. The National Guard Bureau (NGB) started a recruiting program on a national level in the late 1970s. These new recruiters were assigned to the NGB under Title 10, and the recruiters were assigned to each wing for duty. In the early 1980s, these Title 10 recruiters (federally-controlled active duty members) became Title

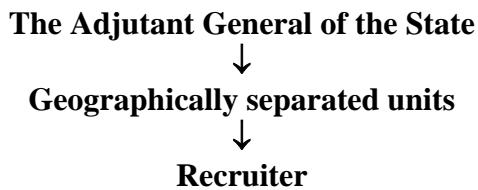
32 (state-controlled active duty), and still are to this date. The Florida recruiting program has grown from two recruiters to seven recruiters and two retainers.⁴²

A. APPROACHES TO RECRUITMENT

This study will compare two different approaches used within the Air National Guard for recruitment, contrasting differences in the chain of command they employ. The traditional Air National Guard Recruitment and Retention staff has been subject to a chain of command which is described here as the Unit Hierarchy approach:



The Unit Hierarchy chain of command also includes a separate chain of command incumbent upon recruiters and retainers to follow for recruiting issues. It consists of the following:



B. RESTRUCTURING WITHIN THE FLORIDA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

In 1996, Brig. General Douglas Burnett, Assistant Adjutant General for Air, Florida Air National Guard, saw the need for a better and a more focused chain of

⁴² CMSgt Iben Phillips, "FLANG Recruiting, Retention Tops in ANG," *Eagle's Eye*, Vol. 1, Spring/Summer 2005 (Jacksonville, FL: 125FW/PA, 2005), 18.

command for recruiting and retaining, and instituted this change in a memo to his command on December 11, 1996.⁴³ Previously, unit commanders were permitted to conduct pre-enlistment interviews for all new recruits. These unit commanders did not necessarily have backgrounds in recruiting and retaining. As a result, they sometimes chose friends or associates from their community rather than recruiting the most qualified personnel. When a recruiter or retainer presented a qualified recruit who was rejected by the unit commander for other than professional reasons, it would affect the morale of the recruiters and retainers. In an interview with the author, Master Sgt. Emilio Gelfenstein discussed his twelve years in recruiting and alluded to this problem. He referred to the old system as “cumbersome” and pointed to the way in which the Wing Commanders could arbitrarily disapprove an enlistee for any reason. The criteria for approval were, Gelfenstein felt, “very subjective” and increased the difficulty of his job.⁴⁴ Much better, he believes, is using the Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent (RRS) as the subject matter expert when it comes to recruiting. Retention Manager Mark Wolfenden agrees, pointing out that “In all other career fields the subject matter experts are placed in the supervisory role. You wouldn’t want an FM (Field Maintenance) troop becoming the Chief of Aircraft Maintenance. Having the RRS (the subject matter expert) in charge of the recruiting and retaining staff is the logical choice.”⁴⁵

General Burnett’s 1996 memo gave the recruiter or retainer the responsibility – without pressure from the unit commander – to recruit or retain the most qualified personnel. The memo allowed unit commanders to interview only Military Technicians or AGR applicants, not ordinary recruits. The memo further stated, “Unit recruiters have the responsibility to conduct interviews for the purpose of determining an individual’s qualifications for service.” Recruiters were thus empowered to interview and process possible enlistees in a more timely and professional manner, with the goal of manning the specialties needed.

⁴³ Brig. General Douglas Burnett, “Memo: FLANG Pre-Enlistment Interview Policy,” 1996.

⁴⁴ Telephone interview with author, May 26, 2005.

⁴⁵ Email to author, November 17, 2005

In this memorandum, Gen. Burnett directed "While unit commanders are not permitted to conduct pre-enlistment interviews, they should ensure that new enlistees are given a thorough orientation to the unit. These orientations have proven their value in long-term retaining of unit personnel and should be conducted as soon as possible after the member's enlistment." Previously, the unit commander had been involved in the process of recruiting and retaining in the interview process. With this change, the enlistee would not have met the unit commanders or members of the new command until after joining the unit. This orientation by the unit commander gives the new member a clear understanding of the mission, the unit, the chain of command, the personnel team, and what is expected of the individual. This change also allows a new member to feel like a member of a "team" and see first-hand the professionalism of the Air National Guard.

From 1996 until June 9, 2000, the Florida Air National Guard had a recruiting rate of approximately 87.3 percent. This percentage, although good, did not meet the expectations of General Burnett. On June 9, 2000, he issued a memorandum to all unit commanders, entitled "Supervision of FLANG Recruiters and Retainers."⁴⁶ In this memorandum General Burnett declared that,

Presently, our state is showing levels of 87.3% manning for enlisted and 83.1% manning for officers while 12.9% of our force is eligible to retire in the next three years.... Combined with the increased emphasis from the National Guard Bureau to respond to "critical levels" highlighted a need for consolidation of the recruiting and retaining program under State Headquarters. I am absolutely convinced we must respond more aggressively to the recruiting and retaining challenges facing the Air National Guard today and I want Florida to be extremely proactive in making positive changes to meet these challenges.

This memorandum initiated changes within the Florida Air National Guard that improved recruitment and retention in the FLANG dramatically.⁴⁷ Specifically, General Burnett referred to Air National Guard Instructions (AGI) 36-2602, which outlines the

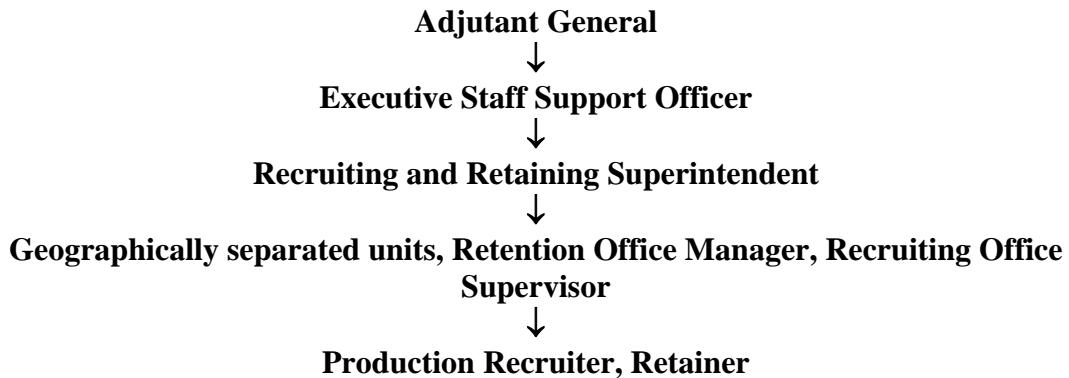
⁴⁶ Brig. General Douglas Burnett, Assistant Adjutant General for Air, "Memorandum for all Unit Commanders: Supervision of FL ANG Recruiters and Retainers," June 9, 2000.

⁴⁷ Per e-mailed received from CMSgt. Iben Philips, Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent, Florida Air National Guard, Headquarters, St. Augustine, March 2005.

responsibilities and management of the recruiting and retaining program, as well as Chapter 2 (2.2.5) which states the Executive Support Staff Officer (ESSO) will

[Direct] and administer the state Recruiting and Retaining Program through the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent. Additionally, the ESSO is tasked to ensure the state ANG manpower procurement objectives are met, and make a quality effort with the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent (RRS), the Director of Personnel, the Retention Office Manager (ROM), the Recruiting Office Supervisor (ROS), Geographically Separated Units (GSU), commanders, and GSU Recruiting and Retention NCOs (RRNCOs).⁴⁸

Gen. Burnett's memorandum declared a change in command for the recruiting and retaining staff, extracting the recruiters and retainers from the local units and putting them under the Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent for the entire state.



This gave recruiters and retainers the freedom for increased teamwork and the ability to focus on their mission under the guidance of the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent (RRS). Under the unit-hierarchy chain of command, the recruiters and retainers are responsible to their Wing Commanders, Chiefs of Personnel and the RRS. The recruiters and retainers are on the manning documents for their individual units, which gives the impression that the unit commanders can assign additional responsibilities to the recruiters and retainers. As one Retention Manager commented, "Directors of Personnel (DPs) think that Recruiting and Retaining (R&R) people don't do

⁴⁸ National Guard Bureau, *Air Guard Instructions*, Chapter 2.2.5 (National Guard Bureau, Air National Guard).

anything and should stay behind their desks, being glorified personnel specialists. DPs also tend to feel it necessary to give R&R personnel many additional duty tasks.”⁴⁹

In addition – not fully realizing the responsibilities and job requirements of the recruiting and retaining staff – there can be misunderstandings and, at times, confusion about the work schedules of the recruiters and retainers. Utilization of the RRS eliminates much of this confusion. According to an RRS who had worked under both systems, “DPs were primarily trained and focused on personnel matters. This created conflicts because you had a situation where recruiters were working in positions [where] in most cases their immediate supervisors had little or no recruiting/retention and sales experience.”⁵⁰ A Recruiting and Retention NCO offered this in support of the RRS: “The Recruiting and Retention Superintendent knows what it takes to do our jobs [and] is able to communicate to the commander what our job entails, so that there are no misconceptions on what a recruiter does. Our job is very complex and it is not as easy as others perceive.”⁵¹

C. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE RECRUITING AND RETAINING SUPERINTENDENT (RRS)

With Florida’s transition to the fully-empowered Recruiting and Retention Superintendent (RRS), job descriptions, job responsibilities, scheduling, and assigning of extra duties for the recruiters and retainers were clarified throughout the state. All Geographically Separated Units (GSU) were given the ability to work as a single team for the state. Recruiters and retainers were allowed to try new techniques for better recruiting and retaining. With the RRS is responsible for all recruiting and retaining throughout the state, a clear, comprehensive chain of command enhanced the success of recruiting within the Florida Air National Guard. The RRS further allowed all the GSUs and individual units to have a much clearer understanding of the total state vision for recruiting and retaining, paving the way for more teamwork, creativity and networking.

⁴⁹ Email to author, November 17, 2005.

⁵⁰ Email to author, December 2, 2005.

⁵¹ Email to author, November 18, 2005.

An additional advantage (not available to the RRS prior to the establishment of this clear chain of command) was the ability to have the entire recruiting and retaining organization meet on a regular basis.

Col. Jeanette Booth, Executive Support Staff Officer (ESSO), Florida Air National Guard remarked on the position of the RRS:

In Florida, there are eleven different units, with recruiters located at five different locations within the state. By empowering the RRS as the single leader of the recruiting and retaining team, he/she is able to bring the recruiters at all five locations together on one team working toward a common recruiting and retaining objective for the state. The recruiters and retainers network with and support each other in meeting the recruiting and retaining needs of all eleven units. When the recruiting and retaining team has an objective and a mission that is clearly understood and is supported, the mission has a much higher probability of being completed successfully. The Florida Air National Guard's record in recruitment and retaining proves that over the past five years.⁵²

Col. Booth is an advocate for one RRS in a state with authority over recruitment, a clear chain of command, and what teamwork under this arrangement can accomplish.

This change was not meant to disrupt the normal chain of command but to allow a coordinated day-to-day recruiting and retaining effort by all program participants. As opposed to the hierarchical chain of command, this realignment allowed the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent to function in a chain of command that was less intrusive, more streamlined, and much more goal-oriented. Recruiters were given the ability to focus strictly on recruiting issues without getting involved in other assignments, unless the additional mission was a priority assigned by the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent. The roles and responsibilities of the recruiters and retainers were now clearly stated and the chain of command clarified.

The responsibilities of the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent (RRS) are listed in all Air National Guard (ANG) State Headquarters and personnel offices, as

⁵² Email to author, statement by Col. Jeanette Booth, Executive Support Staff Officer, Headquarters, FLANG, St. Augustine, Florida, January 6, 2006.

authorized by the ANG on February 11, 2003. The following are some of the responsibilities and requirements for the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent position:

- Advise state command staff on all recruiting and retaining issues, provide periodic updates regarding the status of all programs, and offer recommendations concerning recruiting/retaining-related force management concerns;
- In conjunction with the Recruiting Office Supervisor(s), Retention Office Manager(s), and the Recruiting and Recruiting and Retention Non-commissioned Officer(s), develop a comprehensive State Recruiting and Retention Plan that establishes measurable goals for the state and by unit(s). Distribute the state plan to all recruiting and retaining activities and appropriate supervisory personnel;
- Track gains and losses, and determine whether current efforts are satisfactorily supporting attainment of goals specified in the State Recruiting and Retaining Plan;
- Identify manning critical concerns, to include career field shortages and identification of critical Air Force Specialty Code, (AFSC) for possible inclusion into the incentive program;
- Increase prior service enlistments by utilizing the Palace Chase and Palace Front Programs in coordination with ANG in-service recruiters; (Palace Chase and Palace Front are two Active Duty Air Force programs designed to facilitate the transition of active duty Airmen to the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard)
- Represent the Air National Guard in developing state-sponsored recruiting and retaining incentives.

The requirements listed above are only a sample of some of the responsibilities of the RRS. The RRS has the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be responsible for all recruiting and retaining issues in the state. When necessary, the RRS may, and can, report to the Executive Staff Support Officer, who is above the Wing level in the chain of command, if he/she encounters a chain of command or personnel issue that cannot be resolved at his/her level. The Recruiting and Retention Superintendent must be qualified for promotion (i.e., have completed Senior NCO Academy) to Master Sergeant (E7) or be a Senior Master Sergeant (E8) prior to assuming duties as a RRS. The present Recruiting and Retention Superintendent in the Florida Air National Guard is a Chief Master Sergeant (E9).

D. SUCCESS OF THE RRS

When Brig. General Burnett initiated this new policy, the recruiting rate for the Florida Air National Guard was eighty-seven percent. The recruitment rate improved to a rate of ninety-six percent after just six months; after one year, the recruitment rate was 102 percent.⁵³

The changeover to the RRS resulted in many benefits – not only for the Florida Air National Guard but for the recruiters and retainers as well.

- The recruiters and retainers operate under a clear chain of command.
- The Commander Florida Air National Guard has immediate access to the manning statistics for his/her force, giving the Commander accurate manning statistics for deployments.
- The possibility of recruiters and retainers being given additional responsibilities outside of their areas of expertise or responsibility is reduced.
- Senior staff is educated as to the responsibilities, duties, and irregular hours worked by the recruiters and retainers. This education alleviates issues with Geographical Separated Units (GSU) about how the recruiters and retainers were spending their time.
- Recruiters are encouraged to network among all units and assist in recruiting anywhere in the state. The flow of information between the recruiters within the state is invaluable in building the team concept. It also gives recruiters another statewide source for filling the many specialty positions within the state, positions that are becoming more difficult to fill.
- Recruiters and retainers are given the opportunity to be creative in their recruiting and retaining endeavors.
- Recruiters and retainers are responsible only to the RRS and the Executive Staff Support Officer (ESSO), which accommodates teamwork among senior staff and the recruiters and retainers.
- Allows recruiters and retainers to maintain a state-wide vision of their retaining goals and objectives. (They are not restricted to a single unit)
- The Commander Florida Air National Guard, along with the ESSO and the RRS, are able to work collaboratively for best practices in recruiting and retaining.

⁵³ Per information received from CMSgt Iben Philips, Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent, Florida Air National Guard, Headquarters, St. Augustine, May 2005.

- Allows for information, policy, and protocols to be disseminated in a timely manner.
- The RRS is responsible for all funding relating to recruiting and retaining. There is an assurance that funds will be available and will be used for training, advertisement, and education.
- Allows the RRS to have frequent meetings with the entire recruiting and retaining staff without interference from, or conflict with, Wing Commanders or GSUs.
- Reporting of goals for recruiting, retaining, and prior service personnel now sent to State Headquarters by each individual unit. This gives the RRS and senior staff the ability to monitor the progress of recruitment and retaining and have this function centralized at state headquarters.

According to Brig. General Joseph Balskus, Commander Florida Air National Guard, “The position of Recruiting and Retention Superintendent, prior to our changes, existed in name only; the RRS was not allowed to oversee and directly supervise anything, thus reducing him to a figure-head in the organization. In the FLANG, we do not promote talent so they can be figureheads. We give them the stick and let them take flight lead.”⁵⁴

In the case of CMSgt. Phillips (RRS), giving him flight lead allowed him the freedom to build a world-class "team" of recruiters who understand the needs of the entire organization and work together to recruit "to" the deficits and work "toward" retaining the talented airman who filled the deficits. With over ten Geographically Separated Units, the RRS had to educate his team on all the different missions and let them know their job was to understand they were recruiting for the entire Florida Air National Guard and were responsible for the overall success of the entire state.

Air National Guard Commanders are responsible for the manning of their organizations. Under the State Hierarchy chain of command, the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent has the responsibility to have the manning statistics available for Commanders. Under the State Hierarchy chain of command, the Commander can have immediate access to these numbers by making an inquiry to the Recruiting and

⁵⁴ Email to author, January 10, 2006, from Brig. Gen. Joseph G. Balskus, Florida ANG HQ.

Retention Superintendent. Under the Unit Hierarchy chain of command, the Commander would have to call all the units within his command for this information.

The ability of the RRS to be responsible for his "team" being informed and working together empowered all recruiting and retaining staff to increase its recruiting numbers. The Florida Air National Guard under the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent has met and exceeded its goals.

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VI. MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING THE RRS

To determine the effectiveness of the Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent model, the author conducted interviews with members of the Florida Air National Guard and compared recruiting statistics of the Air National Guard Nationally and the Florida Air National Guard between 1999 and 2005. The information gleaned from the interviews and the statistical analysis is presented here.

A. INTERVIEWS, FLORIDA AIR NATIONAL GUARD, RECRUITERS AND RETAINERS – ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE

The author conducted seven interviews with personnel from the Florida Air National Guard during the month of May 2005. Each interviewee is identified individually, with the date the interview took place. These interviews were conducted at State Headquarters, Air National Guard, St. Augustine, Florida or the 125th Fighter Wing, Jacksonville, Florida. One interview was conducted via telephone. One interviewee requested anonymity.

Chief Master Sgt. Iben Phillips is a senior Non Commissioned Officer (AGR) with over thirty-nine years of experience in the military. He is currently assigned to State Headquarters, Air National Guard, St. Augustine, Florida. CMSgt. Phillips is the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent for the Florida Air National Guard, with over twenty-two years' experience in recruiting, twelve years as the RRS, and is an integral part of the interface between the Military Personnel Flight chain of command (the Air Force's personnel organization) and the Florida Air National Guard RRS position in Florida. CMSgt. Phillips, under the leadership of then-Colonel Balskus (now Brigadier General Balskus), was given the responsibility, freedom, and encouragement to improve Florida Air National Guard recruitment and retention. The Chief reflected on the two chain of command structures he has worked under for the past eight years and sees the benefits of having a clear chain of command, empowering his recruiters and retainers, and being responsible to the ESSO. CMSgt. Phillips feels that empowering his team, listening to their concerns, giving them the freedom they need to be successful,

interceding when necessary with staff, and meeting regularly with the team adds to the success of their mission.⁵⁵ The Chief is optimistic that the Florida Air National Guard will continue to be effective and successful because of the dedication, hard work, and the awareness of what his team of recruiters and retainers are doing. The most positive aspect of his position, he states, is "a clear chain of command, with superlative support from command and the dedication that his team has for recruiting and retaining."

Master Sergeant. Emilio Gelfenstein, Recruiting and Retaining Non-Commissioned Officer (RRNCO), is an Active Guard and Reserve NCO (AGR) with over twenty-eight years' experience in the military and twelve years in recruiting and retaining, who is currently assigned to the 290JTSS, McDill AFB, Tampa Florida. MSgt. Gelfenstein has worked under both chains of command and feels that working for the RRS is the more productive system for recruiting. The MSgt expressed the opinion that the older system was more cumbersome and gave the Wing Commanders more say in the recruiting process than was needed. The Wing Commanders could arbitrarily disapprove an enlistee for any reason and the criteria for approval were very "subjective." The system usually sent the potential enlistee from the recruiter to the Commander for approval, then to Personnel for approval before the candidate could enlist. In reality, the recruiter or retainer was the expert in the field; he or she knew what AFSCs were needed and had the training and experience to interview and process a potential enlistee.

The positives of the RRS system, according to MSgt. Gelfenstein, were apparent immediately when Brig. General Burnett instituted the change of policy in June 2000. The RRS was immediately empowered by the General, which resulted in the recruiters and retainers having the freedom to be responsible for their own activities. Also, the recruiters and retainers could count on each other for assistance, if needed. The recruiters and retainers could count on the RRS supporting their activities, empowering them to perform a more successful mission and to keep them up to date with new information. There was also the opportunity for the RRS to be able to network with the Wing

⁵⁵ CMSgt Iben Phillips, RRS, FL-ANG, interviewed by author on May 12, 2005. Interview held at State Headquarters, Florida Air National Guard, St. Augustine, FL.

Commanders, Base Commanders, Personnel Managers, and Headquarters to make all of these individuals aware of their unique job responsibilities, the fact that the recruiters and retainers work different hours and have additional involvement in the community. MSgt. Gelfenstein felt very strongly that the lack of a clear understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the recruiters and retainers often lead to misunderstandings among unit commanders.⁵⁶

It is evident in this interview that the Master Sergeant feels strongly that the RRS system has benefited the Florida Air National Guard and the recruiters and retainers throughout the state. MSgt. Gelfenstein made the following recommendations:

- On the Command level there should be an explanation of the position of recruiters to the personnel in all units.
- Selection of recruiters and retainers should be based on their experience and their inter-personal skills. The way recruiters present themselves is a key to successful recruiting.
- There is a need for the “team” concept, which the RRS can, and has, accomplished. The ability to network with fellow recruiters and pass on information for possible enlistees is essential to the mission.
- The RRS system is a much clearer, “seamless” chain of command; this chain of command should be adopted by the National Guard Bureau and all states.

Master Sergeant Steadman Pottinger, Production Recruiter (AGR) is assigned to the 125th Fighter Wing, Jacksonville, FL. He is a Non Commissioned Officer with over twenty-three years in the military. The MSgt has over six years' experience in the recruiting arena with the Florida Air National Guard.

Before General Burnett's realignment of the RRS position, the RRS had no say in any decisions within the recruitment and retaining office. The RRS was a "figurehead." The Chief of Personnel, Director of Personnel, Support Group Commander, and the Base Commander made all the recruiting and retaining decisions. After the realignment of the RRS position, the RRS, recruiters and retainers were able to more effectively complete their goals.

⁵⁶ MSgt Emilio Gelfenstein, ROM, FL-ANG, interviewed by author on May 26, 2005. Interview held via telephone, McDill AFB, Tampa Florida.

According to MSgt. Pottinger, there was a great deal of stress before the change and those stress levels were lowered with the changes instituted by General Burnett. In addition, the ability to be promoted was increased because the promotions were now reviewed by the RRS, along with a review board, and were not delayed by the individual units. Support from State Headquarters was more evident because the RRS was assigned to State Headquarters and the ESSO was assigned there as well. MSgt. Pottinger notes that the recruitment numbers for the Florida Air National Guard improved dramatically after the change in policy by General Burnett.⁵⁷

Technical Sergeant Scott Brown is a non commissioned officer, and a Production Recruiter (AGR) with more than six years' experience in recruiting. TSgt. Brown has over eleven years in military service and was a recruiter for over five years in the United States Air Force before joining the Florida Air National Guard. TSgt. Brown has been with the Florida Air National Guard for ten months. He advised this author that he was happy and feels privileged to be a part of the recruiting team. His previous experience – where he worked under the traditional chain of command – was one in which he felt micro-managed. With the FLANG RRS, the TSgt states that he is better able to manage his time. An issue that TSgt. Brown addressed was that while the Florida Air National Guard makes an effort to inform commands of what the recruiters and retainers do, there is still some confusion: "Recruiting is not a traditional nine-to-five job and the job requires flexibility." TSgt. Brown prefers to work under the RRS because he feels there is a more streamlined chain of command and the RRS can intercede and educate personnel when needed.⁵⁸

Master Sergeant Michelle Hicks (AGR) is a Recruiting and Retention Non Commissioned Officer (RRNCO) with over sixteen years in the military. She has been a recruiter for one year and two months and was the RRS at Patrick Air Force Base for one year. She is stationed at the 114 CCS, Patrick Air Force Base, Cape Canaveral, Florida.

⁵⁷ MSgt Steadman Pottinger, FL-ANG, interviewed by author on May 12, 2005. Interview held at the 125th Fighter Wing, Jacksonville, FL.

⁵⁸ TSgt Scott Brown, FL-ANG, interviewed by author on May 12, 2005. Interview held at the 125th Fighter Wing, Jacksonville, FL.

MSgt. Hicks was very enthusiastic and open with this interviewer. She feels that CMSgt Phillips (RRS) is very flexible, non-traditional, and allows her to do her job. The Chief is always available to assist her when needed and believes very strongly in open communication. The Florida Air National Guard recruiting and retaining personnel are a diverse group of individuals from differing backgrounds and she feels that the RRS empowers and respects all his personnel. The recruiters and retainers that she works with are able to assist each other when needed and are able to bring different points of view to the table when discussing different communities. The RRS allows for a clear chain of command, provides support, is present when needed, will intercede if necessary, and makes timely and important changes immediately. There is a better understanding of recruiting regulations and recruiting procedures at the local level, which causes less tension and less confusion.

The MSgt. is a strong advocate for the RRS and believes that the goals of the Florida Air National Guard will continue to be met and will remain as one of the top ten states in recruiting and retaining in the nation. These goals will be met with the clear chain of command and guidance and support of the RRS.⁵⁹

Master Sergeant Mark Wolfenden, Retention Office Manager, (ROM) has over twenty-four years in the military. He worked in recruiting for thirteen months with the Ohio National Guard, was the Recruiting Office Manager (ROM) with the Ohio National Guard for more than four years, and has been the ROM for the Florida Air National Guard for over five years. MSgt. Wolfenden believes strongly in the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent for a number of reasons. The MSgt. explained that retaining is the key to maintaining a force that will continue to be professional and experienced. The RRS encourages and supports retaining activities within the Florida Air National Guard and it is a priority with the Commander for Air, Florida National Guard. (In September, when there was a drop in the retaining rate for Florida, it was determined by the National

⁵⁹ MSgt Michelle Hicks, FL-ANG, interviewed by author on May 12, 2005. Interview held at the 125th Fighter Wing, Jacksonville, FL.

Guard Bureau (NGB) that the percentage rates were not correct. Florida continues to be in the top ten for retaining within the nation.)⁶⁰

The following interview was conducted May 12, 2005 with a member of the recruiting staff, Florida Air National Guard, who requested anonymity. This individual has over twenty years' experience in the military and more than seven years' experience in recruiting. This staff member reports that since the initiation of the RRS in Florida there has been a marked improvement in staff understanding the role and the requirements of a recruiter. This staff member notes that before the RRS position was instituted, being taken off the primary mission to work another staffing position or mission had encumbered the ability to meet the goal for recruiting: "The training, experience, and knowledge that the RRS offers can only enhance the recruiting mission." The clear chain of command allows the recruiters to know who they are responsible to, who they answer to, and who to go to for clarification of difficult situations. This staff member spoke positively and candidly about the RRS position, how it has affected the daily routine and the recruitment goals. The staff member also noted that the RRS helps to clarify how the recruiters work (their unique routine and that it is not a nine to five job) to command staff, wing commanders, and personnel managers. When personnel realize that recruiting is not a routine job, with routine hours, it can relieve tension and helps promote understanding.⁶¹

B. RECRUITMENT AND RETAINING STATISTICS⁶²

It is the contention of this author that recruitment statistics can be used to compare the results of the Florida Air National Guard with those of the Air National Guard overall, to demonstrate the successful use of the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent

60 MSgt Mark Wolfenden, FL-ANG, interviewed by author on May 12, 2005. Interviewed at the 125th Fighter Wing, Jacksonville, FL.

61 Anonymous, interviewed by author in May 2005. The interviewee is a member of the Florida Air National Guard.

62 These statistics address both recruitment and retaining. Although these statistics are usually addressed in tandem, different factors affect their respective success rates. This thesis has focused solely on recruitment.

chain of command instituted in Florida in 2000. An example of this improvement and success can be seen in Table 1, which shows the overall 7.3% increase in Florida Air National Guard recruiting from 1999-2005.⁶³ It can be seen from the data that there was an increase in recruitment in 2001. This can be explained by the general ground-swell of anger against the perpetrators of the 9/11 terrorist attack and the desire to support the military's efforts to strike back. In 2005, despite the growing unpopularity of the Iraq War and the pressure on the reserve forces, the FLANG achieved an amazing 101.2% of its recruiting goals.

	Air National Guard	Air National Guard	Air National Guard	Air National Guard
Year	Recruiting End Strength	% of Goal Recruiting	Retention	% of Goal Retention
1999	106,000		106,000	88.50%
2000	107,000		107,000	89.40%
2001	107,512	100%	107,512	91.40%
2001	108,500		108,500	91.80%
2003	108,000		108,000	89.80%
2004	107,030	99%	107,030	90.20%
2005	106,700	99.80%	106,700	90.10%
Florida Air National Guard				
Year	Recruiting End Strength	% of Goal Recruiting	Retention	% of Goal Retention
1999	1931	92%	1931	*Top Ten in country
2000	1931	95.50%	1931	*Top Ten in country
2001	1931	98.40%	1931	*Top Ten in country
2002	1968	107.60%	1968	*Top Ten in country
2003	1968	102.60%	1968	*Top Ten in country
2004	1964	100.20%	1964	95%
2005	1966	101.20%	1966	94.70%

Source: CMSgt Iben Philips, Recruiting and Retention Superintendent, Florida Air National Guard, State Headquarters, St. Augustine, FL.

Table 1. Recruiting and Retention: ANG and Florida ANG

⁶³ CMSgt Iben Philips, , Recruiting and Retention Superintendent, Florida Air National Guard, State Headquarters, St. Augustine, FL

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VII. CONCLUSION

The ANG needs to be ready, reliable, and relevant, now more than ever.

Lt. General James E. Daniel, III

The purpose of each Reserve component is to provide trained units and qualified persons available for active duty in the armed forces, in such times of war or national emergency may require, to fill the needs of the armed forces whenever, during and after the period needed to procure and train additional units and qualified person to achieve the planned mobilization, when more units and persons are needed than are in the regular components.

Title 10 U.S.C. section 10102

Title 10 describes the basis for the Reserves and National Guard and at the heart of Title 10 is recruiting and retaining. Recruitment in all branches of the military is a topic of intense discussion in America today, generating whispers of bringing back the draft. The Air National Guard, for the first time, is experiencing serious shortfalls in meeting its goals for end strength. Observing and using the best practices and techniques possible for recruiting is imperative to our nation's military efforts.

The Air National Guard, Army Reserve, Army National Guard, and Navy Reserve all failed to meet their recruiting goals for FY-2005-2006.⁶⁴ The military needs to be prepared and have the personnel strength to continue their missions in homeland defense and security along with their increased state missions that result from natural disasters. Recruiting is at the heart of keeping the Florida Air National Guard manned with professional personnel so they can meet their state and federal missions.

A. THE NEVADA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

The Nevada Air National Guard in 2005 moved to the streamlined chain of command for recruiting that gives authority to the Recruiting and Retention

⁶⁴ Lawrence Kapp, "CRS Report for Congress Recruiting and Retention: An Overview of FY2005 and FY2006, for active and reserve," updated January 20, 2006 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress). Mr. Kapp is a Specialist in the National Defense Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division.

Superintendent position because it recognized recruiting was becoming more difficult. Some of the reasons given for changing to the Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent were intense competition for recruits; allowing recruiters to use their time and talents in direct recruiting activities; and the importance of meeting recruitment goals.⁶⁵

In December 2002 at the Region I Recruiting and Retention Superintendent Council meeting, it was recognized that recruiting and retention was becoming a major issue and that there should be a change in the line of command to better serve the Nevada Air National Guard. The meeting spoke to restructuring recruiting and retention in the Nevada Air National Guard and the Air National Guard at large.

In January 2005, before the change in the chain of command, the Nevada Air National Guard had a state recruiting rate of 96.5 percent. In September 2005, the unit had a recruiting rate of 98.78 percent. The Nevada Air National Guard has exceeded the ANG average of 2.5 recruits every year since the change and has increased manning from a low in 1995/96 of 92 percent to 100 percent. The Nevada Air National Guard has consistently kept overall manning above 96 percent.⁶⁶ The result of this change in the chain of command, though not conclusive, does show that *after* the change the Nevada Air National Guard's ability to meet its goals increased.

B. OTHER FACTORS

This research has focused on the Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent as an effective, innovative, and important mechanism to successful recruiting. There are external factors that are part of the recruiting dynamic that affect the recruiting of personnel to the Florida Air National Guard, the Air National Guard and the military at large.

Currently, within the Army National Guard and to a lesser degree the Air National Guard, there have been increased deployments for numerous reasons. The wars in

⁶⁵ Nevada Air National Guard, "Talking Paper on the 152 AW Recruiting Office" (Las Vegas, NV, 2005).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Afghanistan and Iraq, and the on-going peacekeeping missions around the world have created an environment that requires our military to extend deployments, in some cases requiring consecutive deployments and ordering certain personnel to stay past their enlistment period (the stop loss policy).

Natural disasters also affect recruitment. Enlistment often increases following a natural disaster, as civilians feel compelled to do something to help their fellow Americans. In combination with other factors, though, a series of natural disasters can strain recruitment efforts. During the hurricanes of 2004, in Florida, the Air and Army National Guards were deployed throughout the state. The Air and Army National Guard were also affected by the deployment of personnel to New Orleans, Louisiana, Alabama, and Texas for Hurricane Katrina in 2005. These natural disasters highlighted the concern of potential enlistees and affected retention of personnel; many of the Guard units returning to America from Iraq were redeployed immediately to New Orleans. Some units of the Louisiana and Alabama National Guard returned to their homes and found them devastated.

Economics always play a part in the recruiting of personnel. When the economy is working well, when jobs are abundant and when salaries are stable, recruiting becomes more difficult. The American economy today is doing well and the unemployment rate is very low. These economic factors lessen the chance of recruiting personnel because possible recruits, especially at the lower end of the economic scale, have more opportunities in the civilian world.

Presently, there is an ongoing controversy regarding the recruiting of high school and college students on some campuses. Some schools are suggesting that recruiters not be allowed on campus to recruit, or if they are, that they be isolated in a certain area. Whether this is an effort to make a statement about the wars, or the reaction of parents to the possibility that a son or daughter might enlist, it is another example of the factors challenging recruitment in today's world.

This thesis has not concerned itself with these factors and influences, but rather has focused on a single change that in the estimation of the troops themselves

significantly and reliably increased recruitment in the FLANG and – if preliminary statistics bear out – in Nevada as well. Considering all the factors affecting the recruitment of professional personnel for the Florida Air National Guard, along with all military branches of the service, the Florida Air National Guard is highly successful in its recruiting endeavors. The dramatic improvement of its recruiting efforts has been the result of the change in the chain of command that gives authority to the subject matter expert for recruiting, the Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent. There is always room for improvement, but at this time, the Florida Air National Guard is optimistic and happy with these changes and their results. It is meeting its goals and has fostered a team approach to recruiting within the entire state. All recruiters are aware of the entire manning mission for the state, and they are enabled and empowered to help each unit within the state. The streamlined, more focused and empowered Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent, in the opinion of this author, is an innovative use of professional recruiting personnel, one that makes common sense and serves as a success story for the Florida Air National Guard and an example to be followed by the Air National Guard units of the entire country.

C. IMPLEMENTATION

Considering all the factors that confront recruiters in today's society and noting how difficult their mission is to recruit professional airmen, the Florida Air National Guard is responding in a manner that shows imagination and commitment to meet their end-strength goals. The empowered Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent has proven to have a positive effect on senior leadership, recruiters, and enlistees and has created an environment of teamwork, creativity, and a more streamlined method for recruiting. The success of the Florida Air National Guard is proof that, at least in their experience and the limited experience of the Nevada Air National Guard, allowing the Recruiting and Retention Superintendent to play a key leadership role provides a successful model for the Air National Guard at large, as well as for other military organizations.

Why then do other Air National Guard units not change to the Florida model? If the limited RRS literature is any indication, there appear to be three main reasons for other states' reticence to employ this model:

1. The change involved in moving to this successful method of recruiting and change is not something that people accept readily, insofar as the military tends to resist change generally.
2. There are issues related to control. If a state has more than one operational wing, each wing will generally have a distinct Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent. Each wing will recruit for its own needs and not those of the entire state. At the same time, if there were an empowered Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent for the entire state, issues of personnel, manning requirements, and control would be incorporated under the one centralized Superintendent.
3. It takes a commitment from the Adjutant General, the Commander of Air for the State, and a committed and a professional recruiting team to offer leadership at one level to the entire state.
4. Where funding is involved, centralized recruiting would change the dynamic of that funding in terms of dollars allocated to manning, education and advertising.

What path should the Air National Guard take to change to the RRS model for recruiting? Some reorganization within the state would be necessary for the position to be centralized. This reorganization would require that Wing Commanders, Personnel Managers and other Recruiting and Retention Superintendents (where applicable) understand why the change is being made and how it is affecting them. They should be made aware of the benefits – not only to the individual wings but also for recruiting staff. Issuing a "General Memorandum," either from the Adjutant General or the Commander for Air, to all units within the state, directing and supporting the empowered Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent, adds to the successful implementation of this change. A more streamlined chain of command creates an environment for team building, communication, creativity, and networking which leads to a successful recruiting program.

The Florida Air National Guard, along with the Nevada Air National Guard, has shown that this change can have a positive effect on the success of the recruiting mission. Further research into the advantages of this recommendation (within the National Guard

Bureau and the state and territories) would encourage the adoption of more effective and creative recruiting methods during a time when our country is struggling with manning our military.

The interviews and anecdotal evidence presented in this thesis show overwhelming support for State Hierarchy approach to recruiting with an RRS having authority over recruiting.. This Model should continue to be studied, and possibly implemented, by the National Guard Bureau and other military organizations in our nation. It is clear from the interviews presented here that the recruiters and retainers in the Florida Air National Guard have a clearer understanding of their mission, have a vision for the needs of the entire state, and have the ability to do their jobs in a less stressful manner with the support of the RRS, ESSO, and Air National Guard Commander. The successful recruitment record of the Florida Air National Guard, as demonstrated in these interviews, shows that an RRS with authority to management recruitment, and teamwork, along with a clear chain of command, can only add to the success of other states and territories.

President George W. Bush, in a speech given February 14, 2001, announced that "the National Guard and Reserves will be more involved in homeland security, confronting acts of terror and the disorder our enemies may try to create."⁶⁷ With the increased emphasis on homeland security, the inevitability of natural disasters such as Katrina, and the national response to the devastation to the Gulf Coast, as well as international disasters, the Air National Guard will continue to be stretched thin as a part of the Ready Force. "Ready, Relevant, and Reliable" means that the Air National Guard, along with all our military services, must be prepared to meet any mission with highly trained and professional personnel.

Based on the research presented in this paper, it is the recommendation of this author that the National Guard Bureau, along with the individual state commands, implement the empowered Recruiting and Retaining Superintendent State Hierarchy

⁶⁷Fleming, "The National Guard's Future Role in Homeland Security," <http://www.homelandsecurity.org/journal/articles/Fleming.html>. (Accessed 3/5/06).

chain of command model within all Air National Guard organizations across the nation. The benefits shown in this study and the success rate of the Florida Air National Guard, in the opinion of this author, resolve some of the shortfalls that the Air National Guard and the other military services are experiencing. As the *911 Commission Report* pointed out, we must never again suffer from lack of imagination.

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